

AT&T, he joined then-Congressman MARSHA BLACKBURN's office. When I was elected to Congress, he agreed to postpone retirement to continue serving our district for two more years.

Johnny has been the invaluable link between the work we do in congress and the local communities in the district by being a resource for constituents and community leaders and listening to the concerns and challenges facing rural Tennesseans.

Johnny understands the challenges of our community leaders because he himself has been one throughout his life. For 24 years, he served on the McNairy County Board of Education, including 17 years as chairman. During this time, the Board of Education oversaw two multi-million-dollar building projects in the county. In 1992, he was selected to serve on the All Tennessee School Board. Johnny also served as Vice Mayor of his beloved hometown, Ramer.

Johnny and Linda, his ceaselessly charming wife of 56 years, have three children—Ross, Lora, and Jeremy—and seven grandchildren. Johnny has always sought to put his family first and he is proud of everything that his children and grandchildren have accomplished. He and his family are longtime members of Ramer Baptist Church, where he has served many years as an Ordained Deacon, Music Director, and Sunday School Teacher.

Johnny has done an outstanding job serving the people of Tennessee and this nation through his volunteer work and his professional career of public service, and it has been an honor and a privilege to have him as a member of my staff.

On behalf of the United States House of Representatives, I'm proud to congratulate Johnny Blakely on his retirement and to express our gratitude for his lifelong commitment to his community and his 18 years of faithful and diligent service to the people of Tennessee's Seventh Congressional District.

CRITICAL WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

(Mr. KELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, today's passage of the Water Resources Development Act of 2020, as amended by the Senate, marks a new chapter for a critical infrastructure project that is very important to the residents of Pennsylvania's 12th Congressional District.

The Williamsport levee, located in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, in the heart of PA-12, is in dire need of repair to protect the livelihoods of local residents and businesses.

The flood zone behind the 20-mile levee system is responsible for nearly 87 percent of Lycoming County's economic activity. This area employs more than half of the region's workforce and is home to 24 of the county's 50 largest employers.

This bill authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to carry out a feasibility study of the imminent threat the levee poses to Lycoming County's residents and economy. This study is a precursor to construction and funding for the levee and represents an important

step toward addressing this critical infrastructure need.

I will continue to do everything in my power to work with the Army Corps of Engineers to prioritize this project. Today, we take an important step forward in our community's collective effort to get this infrastructure project across the finish line, and for that, I am grateful.

RECOGNIZING THE LOSS OF BRIGADIER GENERAL CHUCK YEAGER

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise to recognize the loss of a very great American, Brigadier General Chuck Yeager, who passed last evening. He and his wife, Victoria, are constituents of ours in Nevada County in our district in northern California.

Truly, he was an American icon. He inspired the world to push farther and faster and to push the envelope, as they say, a man I was honored to call a friend.

He grew up in West Virginia, a country boy hunting and fishing the hills where he lived. He entered World War II and became one of the greatest pilots that we would know. He had an amazing 20/10 vision that helped him to see enemy aircraft sooner than the rest of his colleagues or the enemy could see ours.

His exploits in the sky continued after World War II, when he was the first man to break the sound barrier in his Bell X-1 aircraft.

Indeed, he was an amazing gentleman. He was a determined man with a lot of grit, provided a lot of help advancing the aviation situation in this country, even just a few years ago, exceeding the sound barrier once again.

He had a straight and dry sense of humor. He didn't have a whole lot of use for politicians. I was lucky to be able to count him as a friend, not as a politician but as more of a neighbor.

We will grieve this man and we will grieve his loss, because they don't make very many like Chuck Yeager. Indeed, he will be irreplaceable.

God bless him and his family.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESSWOMAN ROBY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we will, in short time, remember our friend Paul Sarbanes, but another friend of mine, whom I have not known as long but I have known well, is the gentlewoman from Montgomery, Alabama, with whom I went on the pilgrimage sponsored by Faith and Politics and led by

our beloved John Lewis. She welcomed us so graciously to Montgomery.

She is a graduate of NYU, a graduate of Stanford Law School, and is extraordinarily proud of her father, the chief judge of the court of appeals of their circuit. Her husband, Riley, and their two children I have known, and they have joined us.

Regrettably, she will be leaving the Congress at the end of this year. I say regrettably because she was a Member of Congress who worked across the aisle and who worked positively and constructively on behalf of her district, on behalf of her State, and on behalf of her country. We will miss her.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Alabama.

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Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), my friend, for yielding.

Thank you so much, Leader HOYER, I just appreciate your friendship all these years. I really do appreciate the time you have given me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise before you and my colleagues here today to speak for my final time on the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, 17 years ago, my husband, Riley, and I prayerfully decided I would put my name on the ballot for the first time. Never could we have imagined that that original decision to run for the Montgomery City Council would lead us to serve five terms in the U.S. House of Representatives.

We are so grateful that God allowed us to serve our country in this way, and we give all honor and glory to Him. I count it a great privilege to have served the people of Alabama's Second Congressional District over the past decade, and I cannot adequately express how deeply thankful I am for the confidence my constituents have placed in me over the years.

Each of you sitting here before me knows the responsibility that comes along with being a Member of Congress. Yes, we are required to vote and to be the conscience of those we represent, but serving our constituents back home truly changes lives in our communities for the better.

As I look back on the wonderful things Team Roby was able to accomplish, along with the help of my colleagues in the Alabama delegation, I realized that our most significant duty is to help those who need us. Whether it is requesting assistance with the VA or another Federal agency, assisting with cleanup following a large-scale weather event, voicing an opinion, or booking tours of the U.S. Capitol, my doors have always remained open to each person I represent.

I am thankful for the unique opportunities given to me by those who came before me, especially the chance to serve on several impactful committees, including Committee on Appropriations, Committee on the Judiciary, Committee on Agriculture, Committee on Armed Services, Committee on Education and the Workforce, and the Select Committee on Benghazi. Much

work has been done in each of these revered committees to impact the lives of my constituents, and for that, I am forever grateful.

I have been asked many times over the past few months what will I miss the most upon my departure, and my answer has remained the same—the relationships.

The genuine friendships formed with my colleagues, my constituents, and so many others over the years, and interacting with these individuals on a daily basis is what I will truly miss the most. For many, this past year was and continues to be very challenging. We have all experienced plenty of unfamiliar hardships. Not only has the global health pandemic taken center stage, but America is marked by intense division and polarization. Every time you turn on the television, you see a depiction of disunity amongst the American people. I imagine many Americans struggle to believe that friendship can actually exist within the Halls of Congress.

It is incumbent upon us, Members of Congress, to join forces and work together to get things done for the good of the American people. When we reach across the aisle and work with the other side to arrive at a compromise for the benefit of those we serve, we are truly at our best. I believe the American people are starving to see bipartisanship in action, especially during this time of much suffering and uncertainty. People want to know their leaders are working together for the common good and not just shouting each other down.

My greatest hope and prayer moving forward is that all Members of Congress—new and old—regardless of party identification, beliefs, or opinions, will come together and work toward a common goal to deliver real results for the American people. I have faith in this institution, and I have faith in each of you.

Now, I want to especially thank the people of the Second District. It is your faith and trust in me as your representative that helped me every step of the way. I am honored to have been given this incredibly unique opportunity, and I thank you for letting me be your voice in Congress.

Together, we have been able to deliver some incredible results for our military, veterans, agricultural community, and the unborn. While we made much progress together, the fight is not finished.

I want to thank my Congressional colleagues for your kindness and friendship throughout the years. Not too far into my time in Congress, I woke up realizing that the people I served with had become some of my very best friends. I am confident these relationships will continue, and I will certainly miss our time spent together having conversations about our families and encouraging one another.

I want to thank my incredible staff, all former and present Members of

Team Roby, for your hard work on behalf of the people of Alabama and our country. I know all Members say this, but I truly believe I have the greatest staff in the world. I would never be able to execute this job without the dedication and support of my staff. They have worked tirelessly to serve the people of the Second District. We have a special saying on our team: “Once Team Roby, always Team Roby.”

And lastly, I thank my husband, Riley, and our two children, Margaret and George, my parents, the Robys, and our entire village for supporting our decision to serve our country. Your steadfast love and constant support have carried us through the easy and the hard times, and I love each of you dearly.

On behalf of Riley, Margaret, George, and myself, we sincerely thank all of you who made our service to our country in the great State of Alabama possible and those who offered their services along the way.

Thank you, and for the very last time, I yield back.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I know that I speak for every Member of the House, particularly those of us who have had the privilege of knowing MARTHA ROBY well and spending time with her, she is a decent and good representative. She is a wonderful representative of her State, and she has made this House a little better, and this country a little better, and we thank her for her service.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SENATOR PAUL
SARBANES

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we were saddened to learn the other night when JOHN called me and told me that his father had passed away. JOHN SARBANES, of course, is our colleague. He told me of the passing of a wonderful human being, with a great intellect, a wonderful wit, a sense of decency, great integrity and a sense of country, Paul Sarbanes.

He was a gifted legislator, a wise adviser to all who sought his council. He brought great courage to his efforts for the people and great compassion for all who struggled to survive and succeed in their pursuit of happiness. I know that all of us serving in this House expresses our heartfelt condolences to his entire family, including his son, our colleague, JOHN SARBANES, a son of whom his father was extraordinarily proud.

I went with JOHN to see his dad not so long ago, and I was so glad I took the opportunity when I was in Baltimore to see him. A number of us had a wonderful opportunity to serve with Senator Sarbanes in the Congress. I had the privilege of serving with him for 4 years in the Maryland General Assembly and for 30 years in the Congress of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, my friendship with Paul went back to the time when we were elected to the Maryland General Assembly in the same freshman class of 1966, before you were born, or close.

Paul was elected to the House, and I was elected to the State Senate. Over the years, we came to look differently at which body was more important. He originally served in the House in Maryland, and I served in the Senate. We changed our perspective on which was the most important body.

Serving together in the Maryland Congressional Delegation, we continued our partnership working for the people of our State and standing up for the principles we shared. And Paul was, at his core, a man of principle. Raised with the ethics of his immigrant parents, the foundation of his Greek Orthodox faith, and the values of his Baltimore neighborhood.

Paul believed his first responsibility as a legislator was to ensure that government was always accountable to the people it served. He never wavered in that mission. When he saw evidence of the destruction of justice by President Nixon, he was the first to file Articles of Impeachment.

In the Senate, he was an architect of what is now known as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, which sought to protect investors from fraud in our financial markets, and to protect consumers as well. Transparency, accountability, and ethics were the watchwords of Paul Sarbanes.

He was also a champion for a cleaner and healthier Chesapeake Bay. He understood that the bay is one of Maryland's and America's greatest treasures and most extraordinary asset.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to partner with him on efforts to protect the bay, as well as on so many other issues important to our State, including robust investment in education, protecting and enhancing civil rights, and making quality healthcare more affordable and accessible.

Paul Sarbanes will be remembered as a man of substance and principle, of decency and warmth, of insight and vision. He left an indelible mark on this institution in which he served, and on the millions of people in Maryland and across our country, whose lives he enriched.

As dean of the Maryland Delegation, it is my honor to open this hour of tribute and to yield to my friend and colleague, his son, of whom, as I said, he was so very proud, and we share his father's pride in his service in this institution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES).

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the majority leader for yielding. I thank you for your friendship with my father, Paul Sarbanes, for so many years. You go back with him a long way, and he cherished that friendship, as he did the relationship with all the members of the Maryland Delegation during the time that he served.

I thank my colleagues here tonight who have come to help remember him and pay tribute.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my brother, Michael, and my sister, Janet, I thank

all the people who, over the last 48 hours, have been sending in these remembrances and tributes to my father from his time in the Senate, and before that, here in the House where he was for 6 years, and for time periods before that, even.

I want to thank right up front, and in particular, his staff, who over the course of his 40 years in public service he understood were the ones that made him or broke him. He was a tough taskmaster, but he chose people that had that same set of principles and values and commitment to hard work. A lot of the tributes that have been coming in have talked about him being a workhorse, not a show horse. The idea that you put your head down, you get the job done, you try to build consensus where you can, but you always remember that you are here for a reason, that is to make good, strong policy that can help people.

He lived a full life, he made a difference in the lives of others, which is all he ever wanted to do. He knew he wanted to be in politics from a very early age, but his motivation was in looking at the opportunities that he had, the son of Greek immigrants who came to this country with very little, and he had the opportunity for education and advancement. His motivation was to make those available to others.

He loved being with people. He had a dry sense of humor. He enjoyed bantering with all who crossed his path, was intensely interested in the journey that others had taken to whatever station they held in life. And he was always asking: "Where are you from?" "What do you do?" "What is next for you?"

He had an inherent integrity that was strengthened by always striving to meet the expectations of those who put their confidence in him.

In politics, he was motivated, as I said, by the burning conviction that every individual has dignity and the potential to succeed if given a fair shot, and he was determined others would have those same opportunities that he had enjoyed.

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He understood that if you share the credit, if you don't seek credit, you get a lot more done. That was how he operated.

A few years ago, I prevailed upon him to sit for about 20 hours of videotaped oral history because I wanted to make sure we captured the essence of his life and his career. So, we have this treasure, which we will make available to people as we move forward. I wanted, in his own words, to grab a few excerpts from that, that I think convey who he is and what he cared about.

I remember I came home one time, and he was sitting in the living room on the couch, and he was revved up about something. I don't know what the issue was that day that had gotten him sort of motivated. But he banged

on the side of the couch, and he said: "I am for the little guy. I am for the little guy." He might as well, in that moment, have been stating his purpose in public life. That is what motivated him from the moment he got up in the morning until the moment he went to bed at night.

I am going to read a couple of these things from his oral history. He talked about getting public housing, senior citizen affordable housing, in the Inner Harbor in Baltimore. He was very proud of the fact that you had this senior citizen housing there.

He said: "Next door to it is an expensive hotel, and behind the hotel is a big condominium building with very expensive condominiums in it. Every time I go by that building, I get a sense of satisfaction out of it, particularly in the nice weather. I look up, and all of these seniors are sitting out on their terraces, looking out over the water.

"I know the developers would give their eyeteeth to get hold of that piece of property, but they don't have it. It is part of this affordable housing initiative, so a lot of seniors who worked hard all their lives and are now retired but don't have a lot of money have the benefit of this housing."

He said: "I always get a measure of satisfaction out of that."

We are in the midst, as we know, in our country of some really challenging moments addressing issues of justice. Here is a story about how my father, in a small way, made a statement around justice.

He said: "We had a situation in one of the rural towns on the Eastern Shore, and when they delivered the mail, the postman, he would come down the street here, and there would be these big houses, and he would go up to the house and put the mail in the mailbox. And then as he moved on down the street, the composition of the neighborhood would change, and the houses would get smaller, much smaller.

"The complexion of the people living in the houses changed, too, as you went down the street, so they went from White to Black. And down the street, instead of the postman going through the gate or whatever and up to the house, they were going to require those people to put a postbox at the street. So, some people came to us about that, a couple of pastors or ministers, and they pointed out this situation.

"So, I got the postal people in for a meeting in my office," my father said. "Now, what is happening here? As I understand it, up here with the big houses and the White residents, you are going to continue to go up to the house and put the mail through the door slot. But when you get down this way to the little houses and the African-American residents, you are going to require them to put a mail receptacle out at the pavement or at the curb, and you are not going to go up to the house anymore. What is the rationale for this policy?"

"Well, of course, if you lay it out like that, there isn't a rationale, at least not an acceptable one that can withstand the light of day. So, they dropped the project and went on delivering the mail."

Here is what my father said: "That is the way it ought to work. And I felt it is not a big issue, but we got some justice done for those people."

Small things that stand for big principles, that is what he was about.

I am going to close with just a couple of final thoughts here. First of all, I want to thank the Greek-American community, which was fiercely proud of my father's achievements. He was deeply proud of where he came from. It was an inspiration to him in public service. I want to thank so many who helped him along the way from that community.

My mother, Christine, who died 10 years ago, she came into his life like a bolt of lightning. He didn't know what hit him. He met her at Oxford, this brilliant, beautiful woman who could match him step for step in her intellect, and she knocked his socks off.

I think the great regret of his life was that he had hoped in his retirement—you know, public life is hard. We know that. I think all along the way, he was looking forward to that time when the two of them could spend more time together. Unfortunately, she passed away within a couple of years of his retirement, and they didn't get that opportunity together. I don't think he ever fully recovered from that.

I think about his legacy, and I understand, certainly, that there is no way his children—myself; my brother, Michael; and my sister, Janet—are ever going to match that legacy because it is a pretty unmatched one when you look at the record. But I think we are all doing what we can to continue it, to nurture it, to sustain it going forward.

Again, I thank you for the time to speak here, and I thank my colleagues for all of your support and kind words over the last couple of days.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the son of a great man, who that great man would say is a great son. He loved JOHN, but he respected JOHN. He believed that JOHN was enhancing the Sarbanes legacy, and he was right.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, with the expectation that Mr. TRONE from our State will continue to recognize other Members from our delegation who want to speak.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SENATOR PAUL SARBANES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER).